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ABSTRACT

This report informs about an international seminar, convened by the Lugansk Regional Committee of Educators for Peace. Among the interrelated themes dealt with included: (1) the role of technology in education for a new age; (2) systems thinking; (3) education for peace and new world order; (4) international projects such as "The Peace Ribbon"; (5) support groups for communication training; and (6) education for international understanding. The seminar is part of the Project for Ecological and Cooperative Education (PEACE). About 30 people participated from the Lugansk region, Russia, Canada, the United States, Switzerland, France, and Norway. The tour visited schools and museums as they discussed the ideas of "The Ukrainian Movement Educators for Peace and Mutual Understanding." (EH)

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THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR "COOPERATION FOR OUR COMMON FUTURE" Kiev – Lugansk – Sverdlovsk – Rovenki – Antratsit – Taganrog – Geya August 27–30, 1994

Eva Nordland
International Ombud
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This report informs about an international seminar, "Cooperation for our Common Future", initiated by professor Julia Kipko, the president of Lugansk Regional Committee of Educators for Peace. Among the interrelated themes dealt with were: (1) The role of technology in education for a new age; (2) systems thinking; (3) education for peace and new world order; (4) international projects such as "The Peace Ribbon"; (5) support groups for communication training; and (6) education for international understanding. The seminar is part of the Project for Ecological And Cooperative Education (PEACE).

THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR "COOPERATION FOR OUR COMMON FUTURE"

Kiev – Lugansk – Sverdlovsk – Rovenki – Antratsit – Taganrog – Geya
August 27–30, 1994

Eva Nordland

Introduction

We started our symposium in Lugansk, August 27, under the leadership of its initiator professor *Julia Kipko*, the president of *Lugansk Regional Committee of Educators for Peace*. – We started with a wonderful concert and then a short session at Lugansk teacher training college. Then we left with our busses towards Sverdlovsk and Rovenki.

On the first day the participants had presented themselves and told about their wishes and views. The participants were about thirty in all. About half of them were from the Lugansk region. Five were from Kiev and Moscow, two were from Canada, one from USA, two from Switzerland, one from France, and three from Norway. Most of the foreigners had never met before.

Everywhere we went we were welcomed with a warmth and hospitality that we shall never forget, in kindergartens, schools, colleges, museums. The people we met, children, and adults, we shall remember for ever – with gratitude.

A background for our work as we were travelling and visiting schools and museums – and talking together – were ideas of *The Ukrainian Movement Educators for Peace and Mutual Understanding*. The slogan of the movement is to make the "world around and our life" better, to perfect education and upbringing in the spirit of humanism, goodness and peaceful harmony. – The overall topics of our discussions were planned to be: human being and nature – human being and culture – what do we mean by learning? – what do we

mean by learning and development? – what does it mean to become a world citizen?

The two working days of our symposium were organized on August 29 and 30. We started by introducing the broad topics of peace education – world citizenship and world order, ideas on system thinking and technology in the work for world citizen education. After some broader presentation we had discussions on these topics and asked everyone to voice their opinion.

The following is a short presentation of some of the views put forward. The discussions are presented as a summary where many participants took part in the discussion of each topic. Names are given only in connection with the introduction of a topic.

The role of technology in education for a new age. *Wita Wojtkowski* (Boise State University, Idaho) started our seminar by discussing what it means to be a good teacher. Wita wanted in the perspective of education for a new age to present ideas of the role of technology, focusing on computer technology. How can a teacher get support in her enormous task:

the opener of doors,
the knowledge navigator,
the facilitator,
the "sage on the stage" .

The idea is to ask for – and to use – technology in such a way that educational quality may be preserved and enhanced, and also redefined by specifying learning outcomes rather than by teaching benchmarks. What is needed most is instructional flexibility; computer technology may enable us to do so. Wita pointed specifically to the potential use of an INTERNET. It may be possible for every classroom or at least every school to be linked to an Internet. Important questions are: What could be accomplished? – How could we work together? – How provide an open access to a network? – How take action to avoid a society of information "haves" and "have nots"?

Computer teaching changes not only how we teach, but what we teach. If you want your students to be equipped with notebook computers (a think-pad weighs less than 6 pounds or 3 kilos – means that each student may have a computer 24 hours a day, 7 days a week as anywhere-anytime use) we could teach the use of computers (such as a think-pad) to get access to libraries as well as an Internet. What is needed in the future is a community of innovative educators to share information and to plunge into new territory, re-examination of the relationship between teaching and learning. Organisational capacity to use technology in any domain increases to the extent that it has

1. capacity to connect to everywhere;
2. ability to open and close channels as needed;
3. ability to filter information into the channels;
4. several channels into and from the relevant centers;
5. capacity to use most advanced systems;
6. at least one advanced system somewhere in the organisation;
7. participation that permits high degrees of self-control.

.How important is contact between learner and instructor? Is decreasing contact detrimental? Improving instructional practices requires introduction to higher levels of computer technology. We need to look at the human part of instruction; good teaching requires the human touch.

The way the technology makes a difference: it adds another dimension to the classroom. Can computer be integrated into class assignment in every course? – Even art and other creative explorations? To be truly useful technology needs to be omnipresent. Today's computer technology, and specifically communications technology has made possible a global community united by instantaneous information and analysis, for example it allows the teacher and the student to communicate with anybody in the world who is connected to the web of networks. One can also retrieve data for analysis and share it.

Systems thinking – The next topic, systems thinking, was introduced by *Evelyne Andreewsky* (Dr. sc. French Nat. Inst. for Health and Medical Research, Paris), connecting systems thinking with the use of systems technology and the new possibilities of networking. – Evelyne Andreewsky talked about the shift of paradigm in our generation, the change in the way we understand reality. – The worldview that emerged 400 years ago, with Newton, Bacon, and Descartes, she explained, has since then – down through the 20th century – been taught as part of our school knowledge. Today, she pointed out, we are slowly turning over to see connections and interactions between parts, individuals, sectors of social life. Any study of parts, individuals and social sectors in *isolation* will prevent us from understanding.

Her introduction led to a broad conversation between the participants. – One of the most powerful ideas of the old world view was the "cartesian" idea that the universe is a mechanical system composed of elementary building-blocks. Another idea is that the human body functions like a machine and can be treated without any understanding of body and mind as a whole. According to a third idea – "survival of the fittest" – society is believed to be in a con-

stant competitive struggle for existence; the different human cultures are natural enemies, even more so are the different species. A fourth idea is the belief in unlimited material progress, to be achieved through technological and economic growth. Human beings have a right, even an obligation to be in control of nature.

The British-American philosopher, Gregory Bateson, calls this worldview – the "old way of thinking". He has given us the picture of the vicious circle, the dynamics of the ecological crisis. He shows how famine, war, growing population, high technology, pollution, are all inter-connected. He shows how arrogance is an important driving force in this evil circle, hubris, the concept that human beings can and should be in control of nature. – In his books "Steps to an Ecology of Mind" (1972) and "Mind and Nature – A Necessary Unity" (1979) Bateson goes into the concept of "new thinking", systems thinking, which means basic alterations in all we think and do. It involves assuming a feeling of personal and historic responsibility for everything on the planet. – We can no longer do anything we choose. We must reject ideas, products and lifestyles that are not compatible with the sustainability of nature. Thinking only in linear cause and effect is not sufficient any longer. We need to cultivate our abilities to see the many seemingly unrelated causes and effects at one and the same time, generated by our love of fellow human beings and of nature.

The ability to love must be the core of all education. This is what is called holism in our movement, and the new paradigm may be called a "holistic world view"; reality is seen as an integrated whole rather than a fragmented collection of parts. The human spirit is understood as a consciousness in which the individual feels connected to the world as a whole. In this way deep ecology is related to, or consistent with, spiritual traditions throughout our history.

Education for a new world. What are the characteristics of an education that can foster the new way of thinking and develop in our minds the understanding that nature is sacred and humankind is part of nature? – According to the new paradigm – we have to see reality in terms of unity, interdependence, cooperation, responsibility, caring.

This conversation became an introduction for two speeches about a new world order and peace education by Elizabeth Waag and Margerit Schmid (both from Agni School, Switzerland). Both had brought papers that were distributed among participants.

A new world order. Elizabeth Waag raised the issue, and her question was how we can develop understanding and kindness on our planet. A new world order means human relations based on higher values, mutual respect, support, recognition of human rights, justice, opportunity for all irrespective of race, colour or creed. There is only one true way, towards which many millions of people are already turning: individual, communal, national and international peaceful relations. These objectives may be achieved by united action of men and women in every country. Love of one's fellow men, understanding, sound common sense are the prerequisites. Men should cultivate these qualities and education should teach and practice them.

Peace education. Margerit Schmid talked about the spiritual values of peace education. We all know, she said, that the future of mankind lies in the hands of our children and youth, as the mothers and fathers of coming generations. How we behave towards them has consequences for the future of the planet as a whole. Our responsibility as adults of today is to create opportunities for our children and youth to take part in the transformation of the national as well as the international society. The system of education has come to a turning point and needs new forms as well as new expressions.

First of all it is necessary to recognise that education is spiritual. Educational systems of today are more or less aiming at training of intellect, accumulation of knowledge, competitive thinking and rivalry. Children are today educated to see material values as the most important and so learn to pursue selfish aims separating humans from each other. But education is more than mere training and more than informing the young as to the past and its achievements.

All efforts should aim at providing an atmosphere wherein certain qualities can emerge:

* An atmosphere of love where the child gets friendly treatment and is expected to render friendly treatment. Education is a realisation of the potentialities of the child as a compassionate and tender person, fostering freedom from prejudice and racial antagonism. Education is founded on the recognition that love draws forth that which is best.
* An atmosphere of patience wherein the child can become a seeker of knowledge, be sure of meeting a response to inquiry and careful replies to questions. Here well ordered activities will help the child to develop responsibility. The children will be allowed to share duties concerned with some form of group relations, a factor in determining a child's character.
* An atmosphere of understanding; the child is assured that the motive for his

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actions will be recognised and that those who are older associates will comprehend the nature of his/her motivating impulses.

The older generation should be aware of not giving the child a sense of guilt or wrong-doing. Emphasis should not be on petty little things that are not really wrong but are annoying to the parent or the teacher.

* Above all education intends to bring the individual into harmony with her/his environment and – beyond that – with the greater whole of which he/she is a part. True education means to recognise that we are all interwoven with one another, that we have to take responsibility for each other, are dependent upon one another. We must learn to manage this world together. We are here to live on this planet together.
* True education promotes caring for each other. It is based on human relationship; it creates self-relying independent human beings who don't allow themselves to be manipulated. It promotes inner values and helps to see that general public welfare is more important than one's own personal wellbeing.

A necessity is to foster in the child a relation to the world of meaning and not the world of objectives and appearance. The oracle of Delphi said: Man, recognise yourself:

* Recognise that you are not only the body;
* Recognise that you are more than feelings and thoughts.
* Recognise where you are coming from and where you are going to.
* Recognise real truth, and the truth will set you free, above all, will render possible real peace.

Olga Shevchenko (Secondary School No. 47, Lugansk, Club Meridian) tells about peace education: Our school participates in the international art project **"The Peace Ribbon"**. This project started at our school in September 1992. The ribbon is a symbolic embrace of the Earth by beauty and love.

At the *first* stage every form, every student, decided to show on cloth panels their thoughts, hopes, ideas on how to protect the world from environmental pollution and nuclear war.

The *second* stage was the making of the ribbon: segments which will be our school's part of the international Peace Ribbon. Students of all ages from 9 to 16 united their efforts in this act of caring and protecting the Earth.

Then the *third* stage: A school festival of peace which was held on the UN Day, October 24th. On that day the first lesson in all forms was a lesson of peace. It demonstrated the school children's efforts and wish to work for world peace. The presentation of peace ribbons ending the festival was the most important event. Every class presented its segment of fabric. The cloth

pictures showed great creativity, told about anxiety and fear for war and environmental pollution.

The children's thoughts about the peoples of the world had become pictures made through sewing, embroidering, painting, applicating; they shared one great thought: we – the young people of the Earth – think about our planet, its people, its beauty, its life – and the need to care for it.

We want to save the life on this Earth. All the pieces of message were sewn together to form a whole Peace Ribbon, which was then placed in the school's Peace and Friendship Museum. Segments were sent to our friends of Twin Schools.

As more schools participate in these international projects – Peace Ribbons, Peace Lanterns, Greenpeace, Life Link, etc. – we will get their contributions; then we develop new hope and new belief in the future. The idea today is to share progress and ideas with other students in our country, the Ukraine, and in other countries. On the coming International Children's Day the town presentation of Peace Ribbons will take place in Lugansk where more than 600 000 people live. This is to us evidence that our club's call has broad support. We very much want to share our work with other school clubs and leave our address: Ukraine 348024, Lugansk, Komarov Block, School No. 47, Club Meridian.

Olga Gabrielyan (Pedagogical Institute, 2 Oboronnaya St., Lugansk, 348011 Ukraine) told about her experience with creating **support groups**: "the group as an instrument for learning and cooperation". The group was training itself in the ability to listen to each other, encouraging each other to relate and discuss, making decisions together and solving conflicts. The members also got practical training in positive communication, active listening, giving "me-messages". An important topic was: What does it mean to support each other?

The members of the group encouraged each other to state and discuss their values. As a starting point one had to learn how to organise awareness training and reflection. The members created their own learning environment: how to encourage, give security, create an atmosphere of trust, curiosity and togetherness. – Each member has an obligation to contribute: ask questions about the interests of others, share interests, listen to the opinions, knowledge and experience of others. – Everybody has also the obligation to share own knowledge, own ideas and values, and be ready to reflect and discuss own topics with the others.

It is clear that group work of this kind may become a marvellous means in any class or course as group education. Students may learn to express feelings

and thoughts in ways that make understanding easier. They learn about listening and supporting ways of communication. They learn about descision making and conflict resolution. Through such working methods, later reading discussions and practice, students may become skilled in working together, so that they – in their group – work as each others helpers and teachers.

Michael Kabattchenko (president for Educators for Peace and Understanding International, the CIS countries) talked about a changing world and **education for international understanding**. In 1988 in the USSR a movement emerged, *Educators for Peace and Understanding*; in 1992 after the decline of the USSR the movement was transformed into an international one under the same name.

At present the movement involves educational organizations of 20 countries of the world, republics of the former USSR, also USA, France, Norway, Denmark, Greece. The movement has today three science centres of peace pedagogics, human rights and education conflictology, ten professional creative associations, nine basic educational institutions, laboratories of advanced teaching, and educational experience under higher educational institutions, the International Academy of Education.

The movement established the International Academy of Pedagogical Science to be a forum for global educational scientists and teachers in service, interested in a new pedagogics of peace, responsible citizenship, mutual understanding. – There is an urgent need for educational designs concerning the essence and content of the education of tomorrow based on the principles of *noosphere*: the responsible role of humans in this world. This objective demands cooperation of scientists in practically all branches of science, culture, production, social service. An urgent task is to adopt the new convention on international peace education of the 2nd session of the General Conference of UNESCO.

European conference for Teachers for Peace. – *Annelise Drøver* (Norway, Teachers for Peace, President) told about the coming European conference for Teachers for Peace: As all of you probably know, she told the participants, there is an international world congress for Teachers for Peace every second year. During the 4th congress in Paris in 1992 it was decided to organise the next world congress in the US three years later. In 1994 there should be regional congresses followed up every second year. During the first *European Congress for Peace Education* (Spain, July 1994) Norway had four participants. They were asked if the second European congress could be

organised in Norway in 1996. The decision whether Norway will take this great responsibility will be taken in September. As the President of the Norwegian organization I have together with my colleagues a serious decision to take in the next few weeks. One point is clear to me – I can only support the European congress in Norway if colleagues from Educators for Peace and Understanding International, the CIS countries, will get the opportunity to participate.

The 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. A proposal was suggested by a letter (S. Parkhomenko, vice-chairman of Mothers for Peace, member of Educators for Peace, Kiev): Next year the world's community ought to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War; also to organise an international competition for the best project for a monument to those who work for the liberation of the planet from weapons of mass destruction. The central figure of the sculpture should be a mother with her baby on a heap of broken weapons.

Conclusion

In our discussions – during the symposium – we returned to one common aspect:

> The real result of peace education is for children and adults to acquire and strengthen habits, attitudes and expectations that lead each person in the direction of peace, that is: he and she learns how to contribute to a peaceful development through one's way of being: to show more respect for life, for humankind and nature, to become more caring, protecting and cooperative.

The philosopher Gregory Bateson used to say that the core of personality is the habits, attitudes and expectations that we develop over time; this development he called "second order learning". Skills, factual knowledge, information, "data", we acquire, may be called "first order learning", knowledge that does not need to touch our personality; we may listen and learn, even know "by heart", be able to repeat and get good marks at an exam., – and then forget about the whole thing.

The essence of peace education is to involve the students in expectations about possible changes in the direction of cooperation and caring. It is to create attitudes through involving young and old in caring and protecting activities. It is to turn some, perhaps many, of the caring and protecting ac-

tivities into habits, thereby freeing energy and creativity for new initiatives in an unending work for peace.

For this to happen it is not enough to learn some text; we must somehow participate, get involved, through action, practice, projects. Then we develop some new ways of understanding, caring, protecting; we take initiatives to improve the conditions around us or to stop that which is wrong. Then we are on our way learning peace. – We should not like to use the words learning peace as long as the work is just a matter of "text" – learning simple facts about war and peace. Only when the "context" is included in the learning process can we talk about learning peace; "context" being the atmosphere we are working in, the possibilities for change, the openness, ways of communication, the degree of equality, self-esteem, democracy, cooperation in the learning process. When "peace lessons" have become part of ourselves, they have touched the core of our personality; peace education has got a meaning in our life as values we are acting upon.

In this perspective we tried during our seminar to work on the notion, *the ideal teacher:*

GO TO THE PEOPLE
LIVE WITH THEM
LOVE THEM
LEARN FROM THEM
START WITH WHAT THEY HAVE
BUILD ON WHAT THEY KNOW
AND IN THE END
WHEN THE WORK IS DONE
THE PEOPLE WILL REJOICE
"WE HAVE DONE IT OURSELVES"

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